

Isantimangalam and the continuance of the system of grants for selected bulls are some of the steps taken for the improvement of local cattle.

17. The number of fish-curing yards rose from 2 in 1096 to 7 in 1098, and since then another fish-curing yard has been opened at Nindakara, while a further one will soon be established at Cape Comorin. The quantity of fish cured has risen from 18,376 maunds in 1096 to 53,463 maunds in 1098. Experiments on fish and fruit canning are being continued at the laboratory attached to the Director's office and the fish and fruit canned at the laboratory have been sent to the British Empire Exhibition.

18. Mr. K. Paramesvaran Pillai of the Agricultural Department has, on his return from study leave from Great Britain, been appointed as the Assistant Director of Agriculture, and he is expected to strengthen the hands of the Director with his long experience of the department and the new qualifications he has acquired. The Mycologist, who was sent on study leave to secure additional qualifications in his work by further study in European Universities, has not returned, and mycological work has consequently suffered; but an Economic Botanist has been temporarily added to the *cadre* of the superior staff of the department and he is conducting research work in the evolution of better strains of staple grains.

19. The expenditure on the Department of Agriculture and Fisheries, which stood at Rs. 1,42,134 in 1095, has risen to Rs. 1,95,564 in 1098, the allotment in the budget for 1099 being Rs. 2,11,900. The Apicultural branch of the Department of Industries has been recently transferred to this department.

20. **Irrigation and Drainage.** Realising that the attention bestowed on minor irrigation works in the past was far from adequate, an appreciable advance was made in that direction in 1098, the expenditure rising to Rs. 70,685 from Rs. 32,564 in the previous year. The budget grant under this head in 1099 is Rs. 1,14,100 and several irrigation tanks in the Kalkulam, Vilavankod and Neyyattinkara taluks have already been taken up for restoration. The restoration of the Marutur channel in Neyyattinkara, the Tettiyar in Trivandrum, and the flood-banks of the Kallada river in Quilon also deserve mention in this connection. With a view to secure more rapid progress under this head, a small special staff has been appointed for the investigation and execution of minor irrigation works in the Trivandrum Division. The committee appointed to examine the condition of minor irrigation works in the Trivandrum taluk has not yet submitted its report. The constitution of irrigation boards for the construction of bunds on, and the pumping out of water from, *punja* lands in Kuttanad is pending the results of a conference with the interested landholders, which has just been held. The result of a preliminary investigation into the feasibility of utilising the water of the Sastankotta lake for irrigation is not encouraging; but the Chief Engineer has promised to make a further scrutiny of the scheme. The Cochin Government have, within the last few days, given a qualified consent to the execution of the Adirapalli scheme, but the conditions specified require further examination.

21. **Forest.** The administration of this important department on economic and beneficial lines is a matter of the utmost concern to the Government as well as to the people, but the difficulties of the task, by no means inconsiderable, have been accentuated by the coupe sale system introduced at the instance of the penultimate Conservator, the excessive working down of timber permitted by the late Conservator, and the prevailing slump in the timber market. The combined result has been the relinquishment of valuable timber for nominal prices, the deterioration in depôts of timber which should otherwise have fetched good prices, and a great fall in the revenue of the department. It is a matter of vital necessity to the Forest Department not only to find better markets for the products now in demand, but also to create markets for those that have not hitherto been in requisition. With a view to help the department in these directions, Government contemplate bringing it into direct touch with important centres of consumption like London and Bombay. Dr. N. Kunjan Pillai, the Director of Agriculture and Fisheries, who is now in England in connection with the British Empire Exhibition, has been commissioned to explore this possibility in regard to London, while Mr. K. S. Narayana Aiyangar, who has taken up the work of forest utilisation since his relief from the Forest College,